The Aztecs’ method of rule made them unpopular to other native city-states.  
  
  
The Aztecs’ god was Huitzilipochtli, and they believed that he would destroy the world if he were not fed human hearts.

Huitzilipochtli’s sacrifices came from the city-states under Aztec rule.  
  
  
At the peak of human sacrifice, the Aztecs’ sacrificed 20,000 people in a month to dedicate their new temple.  
  
  
The Aztecs also believed in an older god, Quetzalcoatl. They believed he would return soon and defeat Huitzilipochtli.  
  
  
The Aztecs may have believed that Cortes was Quetzalcoatl. This may have been why they did not attack Cortes sooner.   
  
  
Montezuma, the Aztecs’ king, may have delayed taking action because he did not view the Spanish as a credible threat to his military.   
  
  
Cortes managed to take Montezuma hostage and held him for six months.

Frustration with Montezuma’s rule and that led to an Aztec uprising, and Montezuma was stoned by his own people.   
  
  
The Aztecs had lost some of their veteran military leaders to smallpox and in previous battles.  
  
  
A smallpox epidemic wiped out close to half of the population in Tenochtitlan, the Aztecs’ capital city.  
  
  
Spanish were able to acquire Indian allies which ultimately expanded their numbers. Cortes, the Spanish leader, eventually acquired 10,000 Tlaxcalan warriors.   
  
  
The Spanish had technical superiority over the Aztecs (horses, guns, swords, ships).   
  
  
Cortes constructed 13 brigantines (a type of small ship), that aided him and his allies in the siege of the island city of Tenochtitlan.